

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VALLET 01928 270911Z
ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L VALLETTA 01928

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, MT, IT
SUBJECT: MALTA: MINTOFF LETTER TO ANDREOTTI

REF: VALLETTA 1891

1. TEXT OF MINTOFF LETTER TO ANDREOTTI, AS SHOWN BUT NOT
GIVEN TO THE FOUR OTHER NATO AMBASSADORS JUNE 26 BY
AMBASSADOR DA-RIN, RUNS ALONG FOLLOWING LINES.

2. BEGIN TEXT: AGAIN I MUST DRAW YOUR ATTENTION TO THE
SLOWNESS OF THE RESPONSE BY THE GOI TO OUR PROPOSAL
CONCERNING MALTA'S FUTURE AFTER MARCH 1979.

3. AS YOU KNOW, OUR PROPOSAL ON WHICH WE SEEK DISCUSSIONS
WITH YOUR GOVERNMENT IS TWOFOLD IN ITS NATURE; I.E., A
GUARANTEE BY OUR NEIGHBORS OF OUR SOVEREIGNTY IN
EXCHANGE FOR NON-ALIGNED NEUTRALITY ON THE PART OF MALTA
AS WELL AS FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC SUPPORT ON THE PART OF
THE GUARANTORS DURING MALTA'S TRANSITION FROM AN ECONOMY
BASED ON WAR TO ONE PIVOTED ON PEACE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN
REGION.

4. RECENT EVENTS IN AFRICA HAVE PROVEN THIS PROPOSED
COURSE TO BE RIGHT, PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OF DIFFERENCES
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BETWEEN THE SUPERPOWERS IN THAT AREA WHICH COULD BE FELT
IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AS WELL. GIVEN THESE DEVELOPMENTS,
YOU WILL UNDERSTAND THAT WE MUST NOW BE IN A POSITION TO
START THE PHYSICAL PREPARATIONS FOR THE SECURITY OF THESE
ISLANDS AFTER MARCH 1979.

5. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND I WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT

ITALY WOULD HAVE BECOME THE MOTIVE POWER FOR CONCLUDING THESE NEGOTIATIONS PROMPTLY. BUT INSTEAD THE GOI HAS SADDLED THE GOM WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY TO CONVINCE FIRST THE FRENCH, THEN THE GERMANS AND THEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA OF THE ADVANTAGES THE WHOLE WORLD WOULD GAIN BY THIS SOLID PEACE INITIATIVE ON OUR PART. EVEN NOW THE GOI SEEMS UNABLE TO REACH ITS OWN DECISION ON THE FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF OUR PROPOSAL.

6. IT IS NOT POSSIBLE, INDEED IT IS DANGEROUS, TO PROLONG BEYOND THE MIDDLE OF JULY, WHEN THE WHOLE OF EUROPE WOULD BREAK UP FOR HOLIDAYS, THE DECISIONS THAT ARE NEEDED ON THESE NEGOTIATIONS.

7. AT THE RISK OF HAVING THIS FRIENDLY LETTER MISINTERPRETED AS AN ULTIMATUM, I MUST APPEAL TO YOU TO KEEP IN MIND THAT A FAILURE TO REACH AGREEMENT BY THAT DATE WOULD MAKE IT IMPERATIVE FOR ME TO INFORM MY PEOPLE OF THIS FAILURE AND TO STEER OUR REPUBLIC ALONG ANOTHER AVAILABLE COURSE IN SECURITY AND WITHOUT THE NECESSITY OF HAVING A FOREIGN MILITARY BASE ON OUR SOIL.

8. THAT THE LATTER HAS NOW BECOME A FUNDAMENTAL ELEMENT OF MALTA'S NEW POLITICAL AWAKENING IS EVIDENT IN DECLARATIONS OPENLY AND FREELY MADE BY THE MALTESE PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION IN RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENTS.
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END TEXT

9. ANDREOTTI HAS NOT YET REPLIED TO THIS LETTER. DA-RIN HIMSELF HAS RECOMMENDED TO ROME THAT RESPONSE SHOULD BE CAREFULLY AND DELIBERATELY COORDINATED WITH FRG, GIVEN FACT THAT GOI CONTINUES TO LOOK TO GERMANS TO TAKE LEAD ON ECONOMIC DISCUSSIONS AND THAT THERE IS A STILL UNANSWERED MINTOFF LETTER TO SCHMIDT ON THIS SUBJECT. GERMAN AMBASSADOR HAUTHAL IS SUPPORTING THIS RECOMMENDATION IN MESSAGE TO BONN. BOTH DA-RIN AND HAUTHAL AGREE THAT RESPONSE SHOULD BE AS SUBSTANTIVE AS POSSIBLE AND THAT IT IS TIME THE EUROPEANS BEGIN TALKING IN TANGIBLE TERMS WITH MINTOFF ABOUT WHAT THEY ARE BOTH PREPARED AND NOT PREPARED TO DO IN THE WAY OF FUTURE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. I SAID THAT IF SOMEONE PURSUING A POLICY OF "BENIGN NEGLECT" (DA-RIN'S CHARACTERIZATION OF OUR POLICY HERE) COULD EXPRESS A VIEW I AGREED STRONGLY. LAINGEN

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